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A N
ENQUIRY
I N T O
The P R E S E N T S T A T E
O F O U R
D O M E S T I C K A F F A I R S .

S H E W I N G

The Danger of a NEW OPPOSITION ; and
wherein SOME CHARACTERS, which have
been unjustly aspersed, are modestly vin-
dicated.

Omnino qui Reipublicæ præfuturi sunt duo Platonis præcepta teneant. Unum ut Utilitatem Civium sic tueantur, ut quæcunque agant, ad eam referant, obliti commodorum suorum. Alterum, ut totum Corpus Reipublicæ curent, ne dum Partem aliquam tuentur, reliquas deferant. Ut enim Tutela, sic Procuratio Reip. ad Utilitatem eorum qui commissi sunt ; non ad eorum quibus commissæ est, gerenda est. CICER. de Offic. lib. 1.

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A N
E N Q U I R Y

Into the PRESENT STATE of our
DOMESTICK AFFAIRS, &c.

WHEN we reflect on the late Change of Affairs, when we consider the Condition they were in, and the Situation in which we now see them ; when we remember the noble Zeal, the steady Attendance, and the indefatigable Diligence of those worthy Persons by whom these great things were brought about ; and especially when one calls to mind the prudent Circumspection of the Parliament, the great Condescension of his Majesty, and the happy Coalition of the Best Men of all Parties ; it is natural to expect that Complaints should cease with their Causes, and that a general Satisfaction should spread itself among the People, who are at present as happy as the Circumstances of

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Europe will allow, and have the fairest Prospect of being speedily freed from those Inconveniences, which nothing but their apparent Necessity obliges them to suffer. This I say it would be reasonable to expect, and this would have unavoidably come to pass, if the restless Temper of some disappointed Men did not excite them to use their utmost Endeavours to disturb the Quiet of their Country, and by insinuating their own private Prejudices as the Breathings of publick Spirit, seek to raise a new Ferment ; which may possibly be attended with political Struggles, dangerous alike to ourselves and to our Neighbours.

In such Circumstances it becomes every Man who has the least Concern for the publick Good, who desires to see himself and his Fellow-Subjects at ease, and would be glad to bury in Oblivion past Mistakes, that we may not lose the favourable Opportunity of improving present Advantages, to speak his Mind freely, to declare his Sense of the State Things are now in, and to vindicate the Characters of such as have been most ungratefully attacked for preferring the Interest of their Country to that Pleasure, which results from the Triumph of a prevailing Party over such as they have long opposed. If ever there was a Season when a private Man had a right to canvass publick Affairs, and to enquire into the Conduct of those who rule, or who affect to rule us, the present is surely that Conjunction. We
have

have been long in great Confusion, and the Business of the Nation has suffer'd severely from the fierce Struggles of Party ; we are now within sight of the Port, and it certainly behoves all honest and sensible Men to bestir themselves in such a manner, as may defeat the Designs of those, who because they have not been able to seize the Helm of the Commonwealth, would again force us out to Sea.

There is without doubt a strong Appearance of Arrogance in an obscure Person's pretending to venture on the Examination of the Measures of a Ministry, which it is impossible he should perfectly understand, or have any proper Lights into the Motives from which they arise, or the Consequences that may be expected from them ; but if I am not much mistaken, there is nothing that can be called assuming in the taking to pieces such Discourses, as private Men have thrown out to prevent our Divisions from being healed, and to throw the Nation again into Debates. We may not, till Time has shewn the Justice or Injustice of their Pursuits, be able to judge whether such as have had the Direction of our Affairs have deserved the Trust reposed in them ; but we may easily discern, whether the Reasons offer'd to induce us to cabal against them, and to distress them in the Management of that Power which is committed to them by our Constitution, are weighty enough to free us from the Imputa-

tion of Faction, which is the heaviest that can fall on any part of a free People.

It is justly observed, that when a Man deals much in general Expressions, he does it with a View to cover something which his Interest obliges him to conceal ; and to this, in a great measure, I attribute that pompous Flow of Words, which so eminently distinguish some late Pieces, where, if we are not captivated by Sound, the Sense will never persuade us. But as I have no Views of this sort, I write my own Sentiments plainly, and having no Direction from the Great, no desire to make my Court to them, I shall freely and fairly state what I oppose, and what I recommend, and shall then exhibit the Grounds which have led me to believe that some Propositions may be dangerous, and that others must be salutary for this Nation. In doing this, I shall avoid all personal Reflection, for I thank God I am at enmity with no Man ; and, as far as I can, all personal Panegyrick, the too free Application of which I take to have been one of the Causes of our late Misfortunes, since it had a natural Tendency to turn People's Heads, and to incline them to value themselves on their own Importance, rather than on the Service they did their Country, which however is the only Title to Praise that any Man shall have with me.

We have lately heard it asserted, that though the Administration be changed, the Causes of Opposition remain, and great pains have been
taken

taken to talk the People of *England* into an Opinion of their being bound to be as jealous of the present Ministry, who have done nothing that can be tortured into an Offence, as of any other ; and it has been held forth as true and essential Patriotism, to dislike and oppose such as but the other day were esteemed the best Patriots in the Kingdom. This is the Doctrine that I think unreasonable, unjust, and absolutely inexpedient for us to embrace as a free People, as a People on whom the Eyes of all *Europe* are turned at present ; because *their* Liberty depends as strongly on our Conduct, as *our own*. On the other hand, the Principle I espouse is this, That all the Parties into which we are said to be divided, have, so far as they respect Publick Good, just grounds to be satisfied with the Conduct of those at the Helm, that they ought to be grateful to them for what is past, should think themselves bound in Duty and Interest to support them for the future, or at least should detest the Thoughts of distressing them, as it would be returning Evil for Good, and setting a bad Precedent to succeeding Times, in which few will venture to serve their Country rather than themselves, if they are sure to see their Disinterestedness repaid by excessive Abuse.

In treating these Subjects, I shall first examine what has been offered on the other side ; for as most of their Managers pretend to extraordinary Skill in the Art of political Altercation,

tion, and frequently profess themselves confident that their Cause is so perfectly right that it is impossible for any Man who attends to what they say to have any doubts about it; if I therefore can shew that most of their Arguments are Sophisms, that they often assert Falshoods, and frequently fall into palpable Absurdities, I shall then carry my Point effectually: for I cannot believe that when the Foundation is taken away, the Superstructure can hang in the Air; or that the People to whom they address themselves, will be governed in Matters of such Importance by a Torrent of warm Language, and that Flow of Declamation which has lately grown into fashion with our fine Speakers. An Opposition that is justifiable must be built upon Facts, not Words; and Men are to be governed in their Conduct towards their Superiors by Evidence rather than Suspicion; since if we wait for an unsuspected as well as guiltless Ministry, before we resolve to be quiet, there is nothing plainer than that our Disputes will subsist as long as we are a People.

The first Contradiction of which I shall take notice, is that which runs through the whole, and is indeed the Foundation of the present Dispute. It is this, that sometimes the late Opposition is treated as a Coalition of Parties, and then a Man's resorting to his former Principles is treated as a Breach of Honour and a Crime. At others, this Coalition is absolutely disavow'd; it is acknowledged that Whigs and

Tories acted together so far, and so far only, as their Views coincided ; and upon this Principle the Tories are justified in their Conduct on the Motion ; nay, they are commended for it, as shewing by that Measure *how ridiculous a Figure their Confederates would make if left to themselves*. But it is plain, that if there had been any such Coalition, it must have been by the coming over of the Tories to Whig Principles ; for upon these the late Opposition was built, as the Whigs always asserted, and as the Tories themselves confessed in the very Business of the Motion. So that taking the Thing in this light, no Imputation can be fixed on such, as though they were concerned in the late Opposition, have lately taken Places, and with a Change of Circumstances have made a proper Change in Conduct, which was the End they pursued. But then again, if there was no such Coalition, if Gentlemen on both sides went as far as they could together, then neither are to be blamed for leaving the other where their Roads parted ; and if the Tories were in the right, in shewing the old Whigs how ridiculous a Figure they made, when left to themselves, I cannot understand why the Whigs should be thought in the wrong for uniting again, and leaving the high Tories *to make as ridiculous a Figure* in their turn.

But how just and conclusive soever this Reasoning may be, I am thoroughly persuaded that many Gentlemen acted in the late Opposition

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sition without any respect to Party Principles at all, but from a pure Design to pursue, as far as they were able, the Good of their Country, and to fix the present Establishment on the firmest Basis. If in such a Pursuit they found a great Body of Men ready to concur with them, from Motives different from their own, there was no reason that they should either despise or decline their Assistance ; nor in all our political Disputes, is there any Instance of such a Conduct. So that to blame these Gentlemen for a thing reasonable in itself, and justified by frequent Practice, is a harsh and groundless Censure. But to pursue this Matter a little farther : If these Gentlemen had persisted in the pretended Coalition, and had resolved never to part from those with whom they once went along, the Consequence must have been deserting their own Principles, and espousing an opposite Party for the sake of an accidental Junction against those whom they left, for no other Reason, but because they preferred the Publick Good to the Views of that Party whose Opinions they otherwise esteemed. For is it not notorious, that the Tories have been in an uniform Course of Opposition for upwards of the fourth Part of a Century, and have constantly thought all Ministries in the wrong, since the Accession of the present Royal Family to the Throne ? How then could Whigs, or how could Gentlemen, who, from a disinterested Respect to the Publick

lick Service had detached themselves from all Parties, go on with these Men to the end, without embracing their Notions, and forsaking their own? Or upon what justifiable grounds they could have done this, I should be glad if one of these great Wits would shew us. There is Sense, there is Justice, there is Honesty, in concurring with Men who visibly aim at a laudable End, tho' they may not do it upon laudable Motives; but when the End they seem to aim at may be easily gained, and these People stop short, or are for turning back, there can be no good Cause assigned why other Folks should prefer their Humour to their own Principles and the Interest of the Publick; and this is the very case here, as appears from the wisest Men on both sides having concurred in taking the same step, and leaving others to take their own way.

The same People, with the like or rather greater Impropriety, represent to us a certain great Assembly in very different lights. Sometimes they are furious Enemies to all Dependence there, and would have us believe that the Nation can never be free, if any Man who sits there has the least Influence upon another. When they are in this humour, they estimate every Man's Honesty by the Warmth he expresses for this Notion, and fix their Judgment as to the Rectitude or Iniquity of Laws by the Tendency they have to support or to destroy this Freedom of thinking, speaking, and vot-

ing in a certain place. Yet all of a sudden, when the contrary Scheme suits their purpose better, Gentlemen are arraigned for not influencing that Assembly. A Right Honourable, and now a Noble Person, is treated with very free Language, for not dictating to his Equals in that sort of Style that would have suited some People's Purposes. He spoke formerly to please them, but now they would have us believe he spoke to please himself. Let us attentively consider this Inconsistency. If every Man is free to speak his Sentiments, why do these new-fashioned Patriots blame Gentlemen for making use of this Freedom? But these Gentlemen say they have changed their Sentiments: Be it so, even this is a Mark of that Freedom which has been contended for as a thing essential to a *British* Representative; and your finding fault with it is a plain Proof that it is Conformity to your own Notions, and not really Independency or Freedom of Opinion properly so called, for which you are so zealous. You think a Man free, so long as he thinks as you do; but the Moment he follows his own Reason, and thereby shews his Freedom, you set up a clamour against him, as if he had committed some mighty Crime. Again, if his Discourse persuades those who hear him, you complain of his governing that Assembly, charge him with leading and influencing them; and immediately after, when you consider the thing in another light,

light, you condemn him as eagerly, for not speaking in another tone, and applying the Force of his Eloquence, to further your Favourite Purposes. Thus hurried away by your own Prejudices, you forget the very Maxims upon which you pretend to act, and in the Heat of your Resentment tear a Man's Character to pieces, while at the same time you make such Concessions as shew that he is the very Man you ought to applaud; for surely the true Patriot is he, who without Respect either to Favour from above, or Censure from below, pursues what his Reason teaches him to be right, and acts steadily for the Service of his Country, though it should expose him to his Countrymen's Dislike.

I know it may be said, I know it has been said, that the Case is otherwise in fact, that in the last Sessions one Set of Men were governed by this Body, and another by that; but I must confess, I look upon this to be both a wicked and a weak Insinuation. If Men had been so entirely governed by Interest, or were so easy to be wrought on by Intrigue, I cannot conceive how such great Alterations were brought about, or how such a Multiplicity of Divisions could happen, as afterwards took place. But if it was so, if there was really any such kind of Influence, then those who are now in Power, have taken the most effectual Method to break it. Had they crushed one Party purely to raise another, they had

chang'd the Kind of Influence indeed ; but the thing had been still the same, Men are not made free by going from one Master to another, but by being left Masters of themselves, which is the case here. The present Ministry are so properly poised, that the Nation has all things to expect from their concurring in right Measures, and very little to fear from their supporting each other in wrong.

Another Absurdity into which these Censurers of other Men's Conduct frequently run, is their supposing that all who entered into the late Opposition were Root and Branch Men, that is to say, determined to stick at nothing which might destroy the late Administration, and to be content with nothing less than their total Destruction. Upon this Supposition they frequently argue, and to say the truth, upon any other Supposition, they could bring no Charge at all against such as are in Power at present. Yet this is mere Invention, a Story which they have so often told, that I must confess I am of opinion, that many of them believe it. But surely neither the Assertion, nor the Belief of a Fact can establish the Truth of it. Many of the Gentlemen who have lately taken Places, declared frequently that they opposed Measures and not Men, which was a Declaration very proper for Patriots to make, since an obstinate Resolution to persecute Men in Power without any respect to their Measures, is a thing the farthest in the World from Patriotism.

triotism. Several of these Gentlemen did more, they actually concurred in such Measures as they thought right, though taken by Men from whom in their Sentiments of publick Affairs they mostly differed. There is therefore no colour of Reason for ascribing their late Conduct to any other Motives, than those which regulated their former Conduct. It was their Principle to oppose what they thought Wrong, and to concur with what they thought Right; if therefore they laid hold of a favourable Opportunity for setting all things right, and for securing them from ever going wrong, in what have they done amiss? How have they deserted their Principles? What Grounds have they given for bringing any Charge against them?

I have been the more careful in stating these political Contradictions, because the candid Consideration of them will go a great way in setting People's Notions right, and in dispelling those Clouds which some Folks have taken so much pains to raise, in order to obscure their Neighbours Understandings. Popular Prejudices are easily excited, and as easily kept alive; a malicious Insinuation is with great Facility convey'd into vulgar Minds, and the natural Suspicion which the Bulk of a free Nation are but too apt to entertain of the Intentions of those who rule them, may be heightened by a little Management into a riveted Aversion; but it is a very difficult thing
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to extirpate these Notions by overturning the Prejudices on which they are grounded ; and this therefore must be my excuse to the Reader for having dwelt so long upon these Points, which are however perfectly within the Compass of his Apprehension, and therefore it is impossible for me to deceive him, unless he inclines to deceive himself. I submit all I have said to a fair Enquiry, let him compare it with what has been said by others, let him weigh the Facts that are admitted on both sides, and let him then decide as the Nature of the Evidence, and his own good Sense directs. But let him remember that it is his duty to make use of these Precautions, and not to bring in his Verdict against the Governours of his Country according to his own Whim, or in Compliance with the Whims of other Men.

But to enter a little into particulars. Some People affect to lay great Stress on the Conduct of certain Gentlemen with respect to the *Westminster* Election, and on the Behaviour of a Noble Person in particular. That Matter is pretty generally known, and most of the Circumstances relating to it have fallen under the Cognizance of all who have given themselves the trouble to examine thoroughly into late Transactions. By all that I could ever learn, that Business was carried on with Heat on one side, as well as Violence on the other. At the time it was carrying on, those
who

who are now said to have been too cool in the Prosecution of it, were asserted to have little Hand in it; and this I believe to be true. Yet in the way of publick Justice, and where the Rights of the Electors could be legally asserted, those who are now so much blamed, took their Share, and by so doing brought it to that Decision, which has been so much boasted of by some who could have done little without such Assistance. There is a mighty Difference between prosecuting an Affair with all the Heat of Party-Vigour, and espousing it out of a true Concern for publick Justice; and therefore we need not wonder if such as consider'd it only in this light, did not go all the Lengths that such Men expected, as view'd it in the other, and were perhaps interested in the event. It is a Point allow'd to have been manag'd with great Diligence and Dexterity on both sides; and I believe all who are thoroughly acquainted with the Decision it met with, will admit that those who have been lately suggested to have cool'd unseasonably in that Affair, were in reality the very Persons who brought it to an Issue. They acted therein as they acted in all things, with Decency and Circumspection, they manifested a just Zeal for Freedom in Elections, for the Censure of undue Influence, and for the inflicting such Punishments as were proper to render it a fit Precedent for succeeding Times; and surely for this they

deserved

Respect and Praise, or at least ought to have escaped Censure even from such as were for going further, since by their Abilities and Characters, they, were enabled to go so far.

If in some complicated Points which arose in the Examination of that Affair, and which were of so delicate a Nature, that the Public was in equal Danger from hasty steps on either Side, they shew'd much Tendernefs, and became Advocates for Moderation; this only shews that they were Masters of themselves, and not hurried away by their Passions; happy will it be for this Nation, if in all future Cases of a like Nature, such prudent Men are found, who instead of pushing Matters to Extremity, and thereby setting one part of the Government against the other, are content to remove a present Evil without making way for another, which may have worse Effects. It is an easy matter to gratify our Resentments, but a very laudable, though a very difficult thing, to restrain the Gratification of them for the sake of Consequences which may prove prejudicial to the Publick: And this is all I shall say on a Subject, on which I am sorry I have been obliged to speak at all.

The Business of Elections is another Topick of Censure, and another Instance of the Difficulty a Man lies under, who undertakes to set things these People have embarrassed in a proper Light. Without doubt there cannot be a Subject more unfit for publick Debate

than this; those who are acquainted with the History of our Constitution, know very well what struggles there have been as to the Right of judging of Elections, how many plausible things have been said on both sides, and what strong Objections have been raised from the passionate Conduct of Parties in this Affair, where certainly, if it were possible to exclude it, Party ought to have nothing to do. But these are Niceties never thought of by warm Writers, who are for leaping over all things to carry a present Point, though perhaps to any discerning Person the carrying this very Point, appears detrimental to their Interest, The Desire of Victory, the Heat of Prejudice, the Thirst of trampling on all Opposition, hurries some Men on, and excites in them an indistinguishing Aversion to all who are not as heedless and hasty as themselves. If this were not the Case, surely nothing had ever been said or insinuated about the Steps taken in the last Sessions, as to Elections, but we must take things as we find them; and since a great deal has been said, it is necessary that some Answer should be given.

It is certain that the Grounds on which the House of Commons claim the Decision of all Disputes on this Head, is the securing the Freedom of Elections, and preserving the Rights of the People, on which the Freedom, and indeed the very Being of that House, depends. Hence it appears that the judging in

Elections is a Trust of the highest Nature, and the superiour Prerogative of that House. It likewise appears, that they are bound to execute it with the strictest Regard to the People's Privileges, and with a View to nothing but distinguishing in controverted Elections which is their Choice. If ever these Rules are at all infringed, it is a high Violation not only of the Laws and Customs of Parliament, by which in their Judicature they are certainly bound; but intrenches also very deeply on the Rights of their Constituents, and must have the most immediate Tendency to the Destruction of our excellent Constitution. This being the Case, we may be sure every true Patriot, every real Lover of his Country, every sincere Friend to the Constitution must have a great Concern for whatever relates to this Matter, and must have very strong Apprehensions if he sees the least Grounds to suspect that any Decisions relating to it are governed by other Motives than those of strict and impartial Justice. Such, I say, must be the Situation of Men, who, when they speak warmly for the Rights and Liberties of the People, mean what they say, and make a Conscience of what they profess; and therefore we need not wonder if such Men are very tender, and extremely circumspect as to Proceedings of this Nature, even where the Bias might be in their favour, and a present Advantage might arise by digressing from these strict Rules. I say we cannot wonder

der at this, because when they act thus, they act conformable to their Principles.

But now let us see how these People have set the Matter forth. They represent the Business of Election as a mere Struggle of Parties, an Affair managed with great Art and Address on both sides, and go so far as to point out those Errors in Conduct, which, according to their Sense of the Matter, lost the late Administration their Power in this respect. They tell us, and without any great Mark of Resentment, the Maxim was, *no Quarter in Elections*; nay, they seem to insinuate that this Maxim should have been adopted, and that when the Opposition prevailed, they should have shewn as little Mercy as they received. Good God, what a Scene is this to expose to the People! If there be any Truth in it, what must they think, what can they hope, what have they not to fear? If there be none, how daring the Assertion? But since we profess to argue on their own Principles, let us suppose what I hope never was or will be true, that things are as they state them. Let us next see what it is on which they ground their Complaint; why truly they would have us believe that such Gentlemen were grievously faulty, as gave a Check to their Career in deciding Elections, when in the Opinion of these People, the Current was on their Side. A strange Charge this, of which it is as dangerous to shew the Innocence of those who are accused, as it

would be out of respect to the Honour of Parliament, to decline saying any thing more on so invidious a Topick. However, let us dare all things for the sake of Truth, and that we may open the Eyes of the People.

If matters were really come to such a pass, if things of such high Concern to the People of *Britain*, were so far declined from their original Institution, then certainly the rightest Step that true Patriots could take, was to gain such a Pause, as that Party-fury might have time to subside, and Gentlemen might have leisure to grow cool before they came again to act as Judges. We know by Experience that the best, the wisest, the most virtuous and heroick Actions may be attributed thro' Spleen and Envy to sinister Motives ; but when the Publick receives the Benefit of such transcendent Acts of Generosity and Goodness, it is surely a Point of Gratitude to do so much Justice to their Authors, as to own the Uprightness of their Intentions, and not endeavour to cancel a Benefit which can scarce ever be requited, by pretending to doubt with what Design it was done. On the Face of the thing, as they themselves have been at pains to set it out, this was the fairest, indeed it was the only Method by which this Evil could be stopp'd : for if the same Violence had been mistaken for Merit in one Party, which is justly imputed as the highest Iniquity to another, the Nation had been deliver'd up for ever

ever to Faction, and all Hopes of recovering our Constitution had been totally lost. I beg pardon for the Heat, with which I have expressed myself; but I speak like a private Man, who have no hopes but from the Well-being of my Country, and had rather live all my Days in Obscurity while we remain free, than rise by the recommending the Schemes of any Party which would sacrifice the Publick Good to the Desire of being uppermost.

As I do not pretend to be at all in the Secrets of either side, so I consider only at present the Nature of the Charges brought against the *new Ministry*, as they are stated by the Advocates for a *new Opposition*, and the Probability there is of their having any Truth in them. Many Conclusions are drawn from the Consent given by certain Gentlemen to an Adjournment or two; and yet I think there has been nothing offer'd on that head, which can afford any Grounds of Displeasure to the *British* Nation. The Parliament had then sat a considerable time, the Affairs of the Publick were at a kind of Crisis, the Prospect was equally dark at home and abroad, we were on the point of falling into Confusion here, and Things were in no small disorder there; *France* seemed secure of carrying her Point every where, and nothing was wanting to convert this seeming into a real Security, but the breaking out of any Disturbance here. I mean by Disturbances such sanguine Disputes about our domestick

domestick Concerns, as might entirely have taken up the Thoughts of our National Council, and have put it out of the Power of the Ministry, whoever they were, to pay such an Attention to foreign Affairs as the State they were then in required. Things being thus circumstanced, I would gladly know, what Measure could be more proper for true Patriots to take, than that which put a present stop to our domestick Feuds, and thereby afforded time to find out and apply the properest means for putting an absolute and final end to them. Such a Course as this must naturally give distaste to Party-Men, who dislike all moderate Measures, and are for carrying every thing by dint of Vote, in order to render themselves of more Importance. That the Conduct of these Gentlemen therefore should expose them to the Rage and Resentment of the high Tories, and all their Abettors, is not at all strange, but ought rather to be esteemed certain and natural; the only Wonder is, how these Men can be weak enough to fancy they are able to infuse their Passions into the Bulk of the People, and bring them to believe, that those who prevented *France* from gaining perhaps the single Point that stood between her and universal Monarchy were Enemies to *Britain*. This, I say, is the Wonder; and a Wonder it would be, if they should carry their Point; the Cardinal might then again resume his Schemes, foment fresh Quarrels here, and

thereby dissolve that Confederacy, which seems to be forming to effect what the last would have done, if the Friends of the new Opposition had not found a way to break it. This is a fair, this is a true Account of those Adjournments; to them we owe the Harmony of succeeding Councils, and to these their well-concerted Measures which have shewn the Falshood of those Representations that made our Case desperate, and have in so short a Space raised *Great Britain* to her proper Station, and once more put the Balance of Power into her hands.

In order to be convinced, that what I have offered is Truth and not Invention, or an artful Apology contrived to colour the Actions of any Set of People, let us consider what the consequences would have been of a contrary Behaviour. If upon the first Turn of Affairs an Impeachment had followed, and a general and thorough Change, as these People would have had it, the Nation must necessarily have suffered, and it must have been a long time, a very long time before our Affairs could have been put into any tolerable Order. The Impeachment must have been grounded upon an Enquiry, and that Enquiry could not have been the Work of a Day; yet, while it subsisted, the Government would have been at a full stand, and very little respect paid to the Orders of those, who, perhaps, before those Orders came to hand, might have been in the
State

State of Criminals. All this was avoided by a prudent Change, which secured the Business of the Nation from any Stop, while these Affairs were put into a proper Train of Examination. But then, say they, what if this Enquiry might have been spared, what if an Impeachment had been grounded on what appeared to the House from their own Journals, and was consistent with the Knowledge of the Members themselves? To which I answer, That even in the Ferment things were then in, such an Impeachment could hardly be obtained; since we can scarce imagine that the high Tories, who left the old Whigs to make a most ridiculous Figure by deserting them on the Motion, would on the very same Evidence which they then rejected, have voted an Impeachment; and if they had, this must have been supported by legal Evidence; the Votes of their own House and the Knowledge, that is, the Opinion of their own Members, would not have satisfied such as were to have been the Judges on that Impeachment. So that after all there must have been a Committee to have prepared Evidence, which would have been equivalent to a Committee of Enquiry, and produced the very same Effects.

Now, while all this had been doing, and Motions every day making to examine into State-Papers, and to bring the most secret Correspondencies into the hands of all the World, I would be glad to know how any Negotiations

tions could have been carried on, what Weight our Ministers could have had abroad, or how the mighty things could have been brought about, which have so much changed the Face of Affairs for the better. The Parliament might indeed have shewn a Readiness to assist her *Hungarian* Majesty, the King and the Nation might have earnestly desired to carry this into execution; but if Matters of such Length and of such Importance as an Impeachment, or several Impeachments, had occupied the Thoughts of the Senate, it would have been no easy matter to have found time for taking a proper care of any thing else. Reason makes this probable, and if we consult Experience, we may be satisfied that it must have been so, even on a Supposition that all things had gone smoothly in this Road, and the Impeachments met with the same Complaisance above and below. The *French* Ministers would have had all this time to themselves, and how well they might have employed it in the North, in *Italy*, *Germany*, and *Holland*, we may easily guess. Thus it is put in the power of every Man of common Sense to judge, which of these Plans was best, which the most expedient for the Service of this Nation and the common Safety of *Europe*, the Facts are such as cannot be disputed, the Consequences every Man must see would naturally have followed; and therefore if he has regard to Evidence, he cannot be at a loss to decide upon this Question.

If it should be enquired, why in so plain a case as I make it, there should be so many dissatisfied, the Answer will not be hard to find. There were Numbers disappointed in their Hopes, Numbers check'd in the Career of their Resentment, and Numbers forced to alter their Views, which entirely respected such a Scene of Confusion. No wonder therefore if these People were angry ; and being angry what wonder if they clamoured. Such as had joined the Opposition, in hopes of Places, and thought themselves sure of seizing them, might well be vexed ; such as had devoted Men they hated to Destruction, might be out of humour, when they saw this was not to be effected by mere Will and Pleasure ; such as had projected to themselves an Establishment in the new World that was to emerge out of this Chaos, might be not a little displeased at seeing part of the old Form remain. But what is all this to the Nation, what to the grand End of the Opposition, that we should be better governed, and not that we should change our Governors ? Is it possible to believe, that all things would have been set right, merely by turning out at once such as were in ? Or if this was not the properest or the most expeditious way, are such Gentlemen to be blamed as sought for and made choice of a better ? These Things speak themselves ; and in order to be satisfied how far the Conduct pursued was right, or that recommended by the new Patriots fit to have been

been pursued, we have nothing to do but to reflect which deserved the Preference, the Concerns of the Nation, or the Views of a Party ; for in spite of Speeches, Papers, Pamphlets, and all the Artillery of factious Men, this is the true Question, this is the single Question, and on the Decision of this Question the whole Controversy depends.

But, say the new Patriots, the Conduct of the Gentlemen you defend, may be better accounted for another way. Upon the Adjournment they had a prospect of becoming Ministers themselves, and this gave a new turn to their Thoughts and Actions. But let us consider by whom this is said ; does it not come from the Angry and the Disappointed, from those who own they had Views on Places themselves, and make no Secret of their being disgusted by the giving those Places to any but themselves ? Is not this single Reflection a sufficient Answer to the Objection ? Did ever any wise Man take the Character of another from his professed Enemy, or do they imagine that the Nation is as much piqued at their Disappointments as themselves ? There must have been some Ministers, the old ones were to go out, and either these Gentlemen or the new Patriots were to come in ; but if the very Prospect of coming in is sufficient to give a new turn to Men's Thoughts and Actions, what Security has the Nation that the new Patriots would have escaped the Infection ? According to their

Account of the Matter, all Ministers are alike ; the Faults it seems are in the Places, rather than in the Men : so that if this Insinuation is allowed any weight, it will have too much for operating one way as strongly as it does the other ; it will suggest the only Point of Security to be the having no Ministers at all, which is an Absurdity ; and therefore though the Reflection may at first glance seem to have some appearance of Wit, yet upon a thorough Enquiry it is plain that it has no Foundation in Reason, but is precisely what one might expect from the Warmth of these People's Indignation, and ought therefore to be taken not as a Mark of their Penetration, but of their Passion.

If we enter into the Merits of the Cause, and endeavour to discover whether the Thoughts of coming into Power did or did not affect the Minds of these Gentlemen and prevail on them to change their Sentiments, the fairest way is to consider how they would have acted, supposing they had kept their Integrity and intended to have shewn themselves as much Patriots when vested with Authority, as when contesting the Effects of it. In this case, their first Care must have been the settling some sort of Ministry that the Affairs of Government might go on in their proper Channels, and that Foreigners seeing the steadiness of our Conduct in this respect, might form proper Ideas of it, and be satisfied that things were not to fall into confusion. This then they did, and the Persons

sons made choice of, were Men as eminent for their Integrity and their Interest in their Country, as any in the Kingdom; and as to the Objections which have been raised against them, (as against whom would there not have been Objections rais'd?) they only amount to this, that they are not Persons properly qualified to head or lead Parties; which considered in a national Sense, is perhaps the greatest Commendation that could have been given them. In the next, place it became them to cool those Heats, and compose those Differences which disturbed the great Assembly, that ought always to be the Object of the People's highest Veneration, in order to bring it to such a Temper, as might suit the present critical Conjunction, and the many important Affairs of all sorts that were to come before them. This too they did with extraordinary Diligence and happily for us, happily for all *Europe*, with as extraordinary Success. Lastly, it was requisite to shew that their late Opposition was not owing to groundless Fancies, or personal Prejudices; to enter upon such an Enquiry, as might bring the true State of our domestick Affairs to light, and by laying open the Wound facilitate the Cure. This too they have done, and tho' the new Patriots seem of all others to be the least pleas'd with the Issue it has had, which, considering their own Clamour and Conduct, is not a little unaccountable, yet thus much even *they* must allow, that
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however other people may be, the present Ministry are strongly affected by it, they have exposed the dangerous Effects of Influence, and by exposing have disavow'd it, they have shewn the wrong Steps of others in a very clear light, and therefore in these at least they must take care to go right themselves; they have shewn the Nation the Necessity of reforming, and have thereby justified their Expectations of a thorough Reformation. Hence I think it clear that the Prospect, and even the Possession of ministerial Power, has not at all chang'd them, but that as far as the Nature and Circumstances of things would admit, they have shewn as high a Spirit of Patriotism, since they were at the Helm, as when they opposed those who sat there. If they have not accomplished all, or the greatest part of what was hoped for from them, it does not appear to be at all their Faults, and we may run a great hazard of never seeing those things accomplished, if we should prove deficient either in Gratitude or Patience.

If I should continue to run through all the idle Stories that have been invented, and all the malicious Reflections that have been made on the Conduct of such as are lately come into Power, I might be rather apprehensive of tiring than hopeful of convincing my Readers; for, as the Proverb is often verified, that a Fool may ask more Questions than a wise man can answer; so nothing is more certain, than that

● peevish Politician may start more Objections in an Hour, than an honest Man can solve in a Week, though at the Bottom there may be very little in any of them. Having therefore accounted for such steps, as have been most strongly misrepresented, and which make the greatest Impression on the Minds of well-meaning People ; I come now to the second Part of my Task, and that is, to set the Behaviour of these Gentlemen in its true Light, to shew the People of *England* the grounds upon which they have acted, the state into which they have brought publick Affairs, and the Probability there is of their making us a great and happy Nation, if we will but allow them to proceed on a proper Plan, and not force them into the Road of Parties, which was so long troublesome, and at last fatal to their Predecessors.

In the first place I lay it down as a thing certain, that a true Statesman and worthy Minister is one who places his Happiness in promoting the King's Honour, and his Country's good ; and that a bad Statesman, or an evil Minister, is one who prefers the Gratification of his own Humour, whatever it is, whether the Affectation of Power, Wealth or Popularity, to the true Interest of his Master and his Fellow-Subjects. Upon this Principle I take it for granted that the former will be always an enemy to Factions, and that the latter will encourage and endeavour to govern by them.

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These are Truths so clear to every Man, who has a right Turn for Politicks, that it would be Time lost to endeavour to prove them, and have in all Ages explain'd themselves so evidently by their Effects, that no Man who is well acquainted with our History can doubt them. If therefore I prove, that such as have lately come into Power, have shewn a proper Respect to the Throne, much Tenderneſs for the People's true Interest, and very little Regard to what the World calls their own ; then I shall have done all that I proposed, and enough I hope to put out of countenance the new Opposition.

We all know that there has been for many Years past a violent Struggle between Parties, which came to be denominated at last, *Court* and *Country*, but with so little Correspondence to their Titles, that the Bulk of those who were stiled *Courtiers*, shew'd themselves upon all Occasions zealous for Liberty ; and many amongst them who boasted of their *Love* to their *Country*, were known to have made very bad uses of Power, when they had it formerly in their hands. These Names however serv'd to keep Gentlemen together, and to amuse the People. In the end, after a long Trial of Skill, in which I will be bold to say, the Constitution suffer'd deeply from Attempts on both sides, it became at last plain that the *Courtiers* could not keep their ground. This gave an Opportunity to such as sincerely de-
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fired to serve their Country on one side, and such as sought to save it on the other, to enter into a friendly Correspondence for putting the publick Affairs into such a Channel, as might make the Nation safe and easy, and leave neither Party at the mercy of the other.

In such Alterations as these, our Constitution has wisely provided that nothing can be done without the Consent of the Crown, and indeed it would be very hard if the Exercise of any part of the Royal Authority, should be convey'd by any other Power than HIS from whom it flows. In the present Case, such Alterations were made as seem'd most expedient for the Satisfaction of the People, and for the Satisfaction also of their Sovereign. A great Minister was removed, who seem'd to be the principal Object of Resentment, and that Gentleman was brought into his Place whom the Country-Party had entrusted to point out the Reasons why they desired he should be removed, and whose Behaviour upon that occasion they had so much applauded. In every other Step the same Care was taken, in order to shew that nothing would be omitted that might tend to gratify the Expectations of the People, except removing without Cause, the old immediate Servants of the Prince. If a contrary Conduct had prevailed, if the Administration had been taken as it were by Storm, and pushing Men had seiz'd whatever Places they lik'd, almost without the Ceremony of

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asking, I think few are so short-sighted as not to discern the Consequences.

It is true that several who had been warmly engaged in the Opposition, came in early, and accepted of Places; but then it is as true that they did not accept them till it was for their Country's Service, and when they could not have been otherwise so well bestow'd. Many Exceptions indeed have been taken to their Conduct in this respect, but when we examine them to the Bottom, they will be found to be Exceptions rather to their leaving other People possess'd of Places, than to their coming in themselves. And this, if strictly consider'd, proves something well worthy of the Nation's Notice; for either they wanted the Power of doing this, and then it is plain that Party cannot do all, which is a very good thing; or else they wanted the Will of removing indiscriminately every Man that had been against them; and if so, it shews them to be very good Men; either way the State is a Gainer, since otherwise it must have suffer'd new Convulsions for the defeated Party would never have sat down in quiet, and I believe the most sanguine Men amongst us are convinced that they were not so thoroughly defeated, as to be out of a Condition to make head again.

The Effects which follow'd this Temperament of our Councils were of such visible Advantage to the Publick, as ought to have raised

raised universal Joy. Affairs at home went as well as could be expected; the Parliament granted liberal Supplies, and destin'd these to proper Uses; in consequence of this, Affairs took a new Turn abroad, a Turn equally agreeable to our Wishes and superiour to our Expectations, a Turn which evidently shews that *Britain* can never owe her Misfortune to any other Cause than the Heat and Violence of Parties; which ought to convince us, that the only Method to preserve and promote the Advantages we have already gain'd, is steadily to pursue that Method by which they accrued; to consider Ministers in no other Light, than as they honestly and diligently execute their Offices, and to admit that only for publick Spirit, which has a Tendency to promote the good of the whole, and not to aggrandize any particular Set of Men. This is the only end at which the People ought to aim, because it is the only one that can possibly be beneficial to them, and fix their Happiness upon what may be truly called a *Broad Bottom*.

What has been said in justification of the Measures enter'd into by these Gentlemen, is just and natural, as all Conclusions are that flow from Truths; whereas the Exceptions that have been taken to their Conduct, are such as might have been taken, supposing their Conduct to have been right upon any Principles. If the Government could subsist, if the King could be served, or the Business of the

State carried on without Ministers, why then it might be right to blame a Man for accepting a ministerial Office ; but while this is impossible, the pretending to fix an Imputation on one who accepts such an Office, is doing Injustice to the Publick, since it is little better than saying, that no honest Man can be in her Service. Neither are particular Objections better supported, than these general Strokes of Censure ; Integrity and Application are the highest Qualifications that can be expected in a Person who is intrusted with the publick Treasure, and who by his Office has a particular Power to prevent it from being squandred by other Men. When therefore it is objected that such a Man wants Popularity, and is not well turn'd for heading a Party, instead of Exceptions, these ought to be consider'd as additional Graces to his Character, since from such a Man we have all things to hope, and nothing to fear. Again, the Flirts at a Noble Lord who presides at that Board, amount to no more than this, that he was never violent on the side of any Party, and consequently can have but very few Enemies, and no secret Views for himself inconsistent with the Interest of his Country. At another Board the Case is the same ; all the World allows the Ability of those who are seated there, their Probity was never drawn into question before they had Places, and their Behaviour since,

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has been such as would have put it out of doubt if it had.

The Circumspection therefore that has been used in this Distribution of Offices, and the hitherto unexceptionable Use of Power made by those who are possess'd of it, ought to free us from Apprehensions, and fill us with Expectations. We have no reason to fear while such Men are at the Helm, that any undue Influence will be exerted, and there are good Grounds to believe that when things are thoroughly settled, and the Minds of Men perfectly cool, that proper Methods will be taken to secure us and our Posterity from the Fraud or Violence of succeeding Ministries, as far as the Circumstances of things, and the Nature of our Constitution will allow. As all things cannot be done, it is unreasonable to desire they should be, or to clamour because they are not done at once. If the new Ministry have hitherto perform'd all that lay in their Power, then we neither can nor ought to say they have done amiss; and in return it should be our Care not to vex our selves, or distress them because they have not done more: there are proper Seasons for all things, and if they have brought to Maturity what in respect to the Publick deserv'd to be first cultivated, they have not only done their Duty for the present, but have likewise given us an Earnest of their bringing all things to perfection in time. They have already got over great
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Difficulties, and though there are others to surmount, yet we have not the least Occasion to surmise that either Abilities or Diligence will be wanting to conquer these. They have evidently shewn a Desire of attending to the Affairs of the Nation, rather than promoting their own particular Interest, and this Self-Denial and Disinterestedness it may be hoped will set a good Example to others, and by degrees spread a like Temper thro' all.

The natural Impatience of Mankind to have in their Power whatever they are made to believe is for their good, is the true Source of that Readiness that has been shewn to blame such as have lately come into Places, for not obtaining every thing that was asked in a Moment. We never consider that the Sessions of Parliament was far spent before the new Establishment was fixed, that is, before Men were settled in their Views, and knew what they were doing; and it is a very unfair thing to conclude that a Man is against this or that thing, because he is not for it at a particular Juncture. Every Season is certainly proper in which any good Act can be got, but where this is liable to any Incertainty, he is generally speaking the best Friend to his Country, who is least inclined to push such Projects in its Favour, as he is morally certain will prove abortive. Ties of Interest, Heat of Opposition, the Remembrance of a recent Denial of the same thing, may work strongly even with Men who

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are well disposed in the main, and therefore it is more prudent to wait a little till these Circumstances are removed, than to run the hazard of their Consequences, when little or nothing is to be apprehended from Delay. Our Concerns abroad were within these few Months in such a Situation, that if proper Care had not been taken of them, our Liberty could scarce have been secured by any Precautions we could have used at home; our Ministry therefore were obliged to turn their Thoughts that way for a time, and to consider all things only as they had a Reference thereto. But now this Point is in some measure secured, and very probably may be effectually so before another Sessions of Parliament, there is no doubt to be made but they will then take other things into their Consideration, and prosecute them with the same Industry and Success as they did this.

I am well enough apprized that one Topick of Censure amongst the new Patriots, is the Liberality of the Parliament in the last Sessions, and the Unanimity with which they granted such large Sums. But really the reasoning made use of upon this Head, surpasses my Comprehension. If the Money given had been given without Reason or without Account, there had been good grounds for this Charge; but as it was not, I see none. Before the Supplies were given, all Parties seem'd to discern their Necessity; and since, the Clamour has been set
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up by some who did not find their particular Ends answered by the Gift. If the Publick has extraordinary Occasions, it is the Duty of the Ministry to represent, nay it is both their Duty and their Interest to place them in the strongest Light ; for if they should not be supplied, and any evil Consequences follow thereon, the Ministry would be made answerable for them ; and the Case being so, to make them answerable also for the Supplies, is a little too hard. If indeed they had created the Necessity, we might have had Reason to complain ; but as this is not so much as pretended, all Complaints on this Head are visibly void of Foundation, and flow from nothing but a peevish Dislike to Ministers, which if we do not correct in time, may be more fatal to us than them, since it can scarce be supposed that we can long be well served, if we constantly and causelessly go on in mal-treating such as are in our Service. This has been but too general a Reproach on every free State that has ever existed, and therefore the Commonness of the Fault ought to make us the more careful to shun it.

These Reflections put me in mind of a thing I should otherwise have pass'd over, and might perhaps have been mentioned hereafter as a Fact purposely declined because unanswerable, tho' in reality it is so shameful and so notoriously false, that it deserves no answer ; I mean the base Insinuation that the
Peace

Peace between the Queen of *Hungary* and the King of *Prussia*, was very little promoted by the Mediation of *Great Britain*, but was rather owing to Accidents, particularly to a Battel, in which his *Prussian* Majesty had the Advantage. As to the Truth of the Fact, that the Treaty was owing solely to our Interposition, we have the fullest and the fairest Evidence that can be desired; the King's Speech at the beginning of the last Sessions of Parliament hints at this Negotiation, the contracting Parties have acknowledged it with all imaginable Testimonies of Thankfulness and Gratitude, it appears on the Face of the Treaty itself in the most ample Manner. The Ministers of the contracting Powers have taken Notice of it in their Memorials to the States General; and his Majesty asserts it in his Speech at the Close of the Sessions, not only in direct, but also in the strongest Terms. Upon the Truth of this Fact all our subsequent Negotiations stand; and every Step that has been taken since towards the establishing the Peace and Independency of *Europe*, is in consequence not only of the Treaty of *Breslau*, but of the Share his *Britannick* Majesty had therein. This is notorious to all the World—except a handful of discontented People in *Britain*, who will believe nothing that does their Country Honour.

We may judge by this Specimen of their Honesty and Understanding, how far they are

to be trusted in other Respects. For the same Reason that this Treaty is ascribed to Chance or Accident, our Alliance with the King of *Sardinia* may be question'd, our Assistance to the Queen of *Hungary* denied, and our Sincerity in the Propositions we have made to the *Dutch* drawn into Dispute. But sure the Nation in general will never give any Countenance to a Proceeding like this, or suffer themselves to be imposed on in so gross a manner, in a matter which so nearly concerns them. It looks as if the Inventors of this Story thought that their Countrymen were mad enough to wish their own Ruin, so they might charge it and revenge it on a Ministry. Indeed if this Practice should prevail, we might be in a fair way of being undone, for what Encouragement would any Ministry have to serve so ungrateful a People, or what Enemy would despair of carrying their Point against a Nation prone to believe every thing to their own Dishonour, and inclin'd to distress such as endeavour to do them Service? A Set of People at liberty to coin false Money, would always have the Appearance of Riches; and a Set of Men who think themselves at liberty to coin false Facts, can never be at a loss for a Charge against the best Ministry that ever was, or will be; but in both Cases the Cheats themselves will scarce be more culpable than the Fools that give them Credit. Where our Property or our Safety are at Stake, it behoves us to have our Eyes

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open, and if by winking we encourage Frauds, we may be destroyed, but we have no right to complain.

But what exceeds in Malice and Absurdity even this strange Behaviour, is the Conduct of certain Persons towards a Nobleman who derives his Title from his Merit, and owes his Seat in the House of Peers to the Service he has done the Nation. He distinguished himself early by his Love of Liberty, and has upon all Occasions shewn a Readiness to oppose whatever Measures appear'd to him detrimental, or dishonourable to his Country. This Care of the publick Welfare, join'd to his Zeal for the Royal Family, advanc'd him many Years ago to Places of Honour and Profit, in which he acquired no less Reputation by his diligent Discharge of his Duty, than he shew'd Disinterestedness and true publick Spirit by resigning them, when his remaining in Power might seem to countenance such Measures as were dangerous to the Nation. Upon this Plan of Action we have seen him warmly contending against the *South-Sea* Scheme, and every other iniquitous Scheme from that time to this. His indefatigable Pains, his bold and free Manner of speaking, his inflexible Courage, his invincible Probity have render'd him so remarkable, and have been so often confessed by Enemies as well as Friends, that one would think no Man could have a more unenvied Right to Honour, and that

the People of *Britain* might say of him, when raised to the Peerage, as the *Romans* did of one of their Emperors, that none could deserve that Dignity better than him whose Life was a continued Censorship.

In respect of the late Struggle of Parties, the Conduct of this Noble Person was precisely such as a wise Man would have expected, he was severe on wrong Measures, but tender of Men's Persons, indefatigable in his Endeavours to serve the Nation, but averse to all such Steps as could only serve to shew his own or other Men's Resentments. His Credit with both Parties was so high, that he was able to prevent things from running into Confusion, and preserved by his healing Advices, such a Spirit of Moderation in a certain great Assembly, as enabled them to go through the publick Business in such a Manner, as to receive the Thanks of their Sovereign, and to merit those of all *Europe*. He did this too at a Juncture, when if either his Passion or Self-Interest had prevailed over his Reason and his Virtue, he might have acted a very different Part; he might have chosen what most in his Situation have chosen, to have made himself great and terrible as the Head of a Party; he might have thrown out sounding Words to have charm'd the Populace, and by a free Distribution of fair Promises might have secured a numerous Body of Followers, who have shewn themselves to be fond of nothing but Places. He
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might have done this, and have been flatter'd upon it, by such as now defame him ; but he was wise enough to disdain, and honest enough to detest even the Thoughts of being popular at the Expence of the People's Interests. He knew what was fit to be done for them, and what was fit for him to do, he saw the proper time was come to give a Check to that Spirit, which, under Colour of promoting Liberty, might in the end overturn the Constitution. He was sensible that till Party-Notions could be eradicated, the Freedom of the Senate and of the Nation, must depend upon the Balance of Parties ; and thus he wisely regulated his Conduct not by the chimerical Maxims of speculative Politicians, but by the Circumstances of things ; and if he did not do all that could be wish'd in favour of his Country, he at least did all that could possibly be done.

I have given a general Description of his Conduct as it appears to me, and must appear to any Man who examines it impartially, and resolves to depend upon Facts and not on the Surmises of such as have a visible Interest in all they say. But there are two Points in respect to his Behaviour which deserve particular Notice ; the first is, that being conscious to himself of having suffer'd in the Course of a long Dispute, some Expressions to escape him which might be understood in such a Sense as implied personal Prejudice, he therefore

fore declined having any Share in a personal Enquiry ; which was an Action so full of good Sense, unaffected Modesty, and nice Honour, that a Man must be intirely destitute of them all, who is not ready to applaud it. The other was, his avoiding any Share in the Spoil, and contenting himself with having all Places in his Power, without accepting any. As in the former he shew'd the greatest Generosity, so in this he manifested the highest Integrity ; and as the one proves that he had lost all Resentment, so the other shews that he was untainted with Corruption. But it may be said, he has accepted a Title. Accepted it, and what then ? Has he not deserv'd it ? Could the Crown do less for one who had done so much for the Nation ? Or could a Man, after professing such Zeal for the Constitution, refuse the only Reward consistent therewith. If he accepted a Title, he does Honour to that Title ; and if he had declined it, he would have dishonour'd himself, he would have drawn an Imputation on the Appearance of Patriotism ; and it might then have been suspected, that to be well with the People, a Man slighted the Favours of his Prince ; which I hope is not yet, or ever will be the Case in *Britain*.

If it should be expected that now I ought to reckon up the Objections made by the other Side, I must desire to be excused. To repeat idle Stories, malicious Jest, groundless

less Suggestions, and glaring Falshoods, is none of my business; let such as desire to be acquainted with them seek them in the Pictures, Journals, Verse and Prose Pamphlets, through which they are scattered, and let them remember while they are thus employed, that no Man's Innocence can defend him from such Insults. We know that Scandal is a Tax every Man pays for being eminent. It is the Slave that runs behind the triumphant Chariot to allay the Hero's Joy, and put him in mind of Mortality; that is, in other Words, to teach him that he has Men to deal with, who cannot bestow unmixed Praise, or forbear joining Envy with their Admiration. But we should have a care of pushing this too far for our own sakes, if we bespatter Men in proportion as they serve us, and pay such Patriots as refuse to pay themselves with Injuries and Reproaches, it may be doubtful whether in succeeding times this may not deter others from following their Examples; for though, as I once before observed, this Conduct has been too common in Free States, yet the Consequences are such as ought to make us fearful that Men who hope for no other Reward than Fame, will not be content to trust even for that to Posterity, but rather incline to take something of less Value, because more certain and nearer at hand. We shew our own Corruption by suspecting all Men, and discover

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an unreasonable Spirit of Censure, when we accuse the Great for want of publick Spirit, and yet take pains to lessen its Merit, and even to draw its Reality into Dispute, when it is found in the most eminent Degree. We gratify our Spleen indeed in such Reflections, but then we prostitute our Judgments, and by aspersing our Benefactors seek the Ruin of ourselves.

Upon the whole, if we examine the present State of Things with a View to the Interest of the Nation, and without any Bias from Party, we cannot but discover a very agreeable Prospect, the greatest, the wisest, and the worthiest Persons in the three Kingdoms (at least so reputed before they accepted Places) are now at the head of Affairs. They have heretofore declared in the most publick manner in favour of Liberty and the Rights of the People, and nothing in their Conduct has given us any just reason to suspect that they have changed their Sentiments with their Stations. In respect to their Councils, they have pursued such Steps as the Honour and Interest of their Country required, and were dictated to them by the Voice of the People; so that if we fall foul of them at present, we must give the lye to ourselves; if they have consented in a legislative Capacity to the raising of Troops, they have as Ministers employed them; if they have equipped Fleets at a great expence to the Nation, they

they have employed those Fleets in such a manner that their greatest Enemies cannot say that even double the Sum which that Expence may amount to, would have been thrown away. This has made us formidable, and at the same time rendered us beloved and respected abroad ; why then should it not contribute in some measure to render us content at home ? If we have not obtained all the Laws that may be requisite for securing the Freedom and Privileges of Elections, for checking the Power of Influence, and in short for putting the Liberty of the Subject absolutely out of Fear, as well as Danger, a little Reflection will shew us the true Cause why all this was not done. While Clamour and Party Spirit prevailed, before Examination and Enquiry were made, at a time when Mens Hopes and Fears beat high, could a perfect Reformation be by any wise Man hoped for ; or, is less than a perfect Reformation what we seek ? There must be Leisure for Men's Passions to cool, there must be room left for Jealousies of all sorts to subside, there must be proper Opportunities taken to shew that even private Interests are best provided for by such Laws as are for the publick Benefit, and then we shall see that clear, explicit and effectual Bills will be brought in by common Consent, and carried through with little Opposition. The present Parliament has already done much ; in the next Sessions we

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may justly expect more, and in time all.

I say, this we may expect, because there is no pretence for saying, that any of the Gentlemen who have been lately attacked as Deserters of their former Principles, have actually said or done any thing which shews the least sign of their harbouring any such Intention. On the contrary, they have made the most solemn Profession of their accepting Power, with no other view than to employ it for the Honour of the King and the Benefit of his Subjects. If before their coming into Power they were acknowledged to be Men of Honour, why should we not believe these Professions? If since they have acquired Power, they have done none but popular things, why should not we believe their Actions? These cannot certainly deceive us. If it is become a settled Maxim never to rely on Place-Men, for God's sake let us resolve to trust our selves; let us have some Rule of judging; let us not be toss'd to and fro' at the Mercy of every Wind and Wave, and by our own Violence and Mutability beget a Suspicion that we are not safely to be trusted. This is the single thing that can ruin us, and therefore this is the single thing we ought to avoid, if we have any respect to Honour, Interest or Happiness, any real Care of our selves, or Concern for our Posterity.

I shall conclude with observing, that if you take things upon these People's stating, that is,
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take it for granted that Affairs will never go right till such time as all in the new Opposition have Places, to which all their high Pretences of Patriotism tend, then you must go on in a continual Circle of Changes and Oppositions : For if once opposing Power appears to be the sole Road to Power, why then as Men grow up who have or who imagine they have Abilities to manage and consequently a good Title to acquire Power, they will immediately throw themselves into this Path, and persist in it till they come to their wish'd for End. The bringing things into such a Rotation, has been the constant Method by which all Free States have been brought to their End. A certain Progression of Power in conformity to their respective Constitutions, is natural to them all, and may sometimes be quicken'd by Party-Struggles, without any very great Detriment ; but when through the Force of Faction this Motion is increas'd to such a degree of Rapidity, the Machine of Government is no longer able to subsist, but either stops in Tyranny, or shivers into Anarchy. I am sorry to express my self in Allegory, but there are some things which ought not to be spoke too plainly. I am persuaded that there is Truth in what I say, and that whoever considers it, will discern it.

There never was an Opposition so honest as to own, that Places were their only View, and therefore we need not wonder that

Reasons are offer'd to shew, that the Causes of the late Opposition exist. Exist! ay, and ever will exist; for if such as have declared themselves for this Party were to be satisfied, a new Corps of Reasoners would start up, and we should hear of fresh Motives for continuing the Opposition. If the Gentlemen we are now to deal with had been in earnest, such warm and disinterested Friends to their Country, as they give themselves out to be, they would have told us plainly what were their Grounds of Discontent, what they thought necessary to be done for the Nation's Service, and what would reconcile all Parties; and this in particular, not in general Terms: for if they are reasonable Men as well as good Patriots, they must know what they seek, and therefore can be at no Loss for these Heads; and if on the other hand they have a mind to make a Secret of their political Creed, they cannot with any Justice pretend to persecute such as do not believe it. In short, if they will tell us what they would have, we shall know what to think; but if they persist in talking of repairing Oversights, settling Rights not rightly understood (which by the way is a hobbling Expression) retrieving such as have been neglected, acquiring those to which we have a natural Title, and securing such as are liable to Abuse, why we can never know what to think—except it be—that they want Places—and do not care to speak out.

But

But if the Bulk of the *British* Nation can be content to see publick Affairs in proper Hands, in the Hands of Men of Birth, Breeding and Abilities, if they will allow a proper Time for all things, and rejoice at every Success of their Ministry as if it was their own, as it certainly is; if they will be satisfied with injoying the utmost Stretch of Liberty at home, and believe what they are told by the universal Consent of foreign Nations as to their Reputation abroad, no doubt they may be both happy and great. But if they will listen to no Information but what is brought them in Speeches, Journals and Pamphlets written by interested Persons, who are to find their Account in imposing upon them, why they will be imposed upon, and consequently will never be either great or happy, let Ministers act as they will; for they can only put things in our Power, whether we will or will not use them, depends upon our selves.

But it may be said, Oppositions have been necessary, and how shall we know that an Opposition is not necessary now? Why how do you know when any thing is necessary but by feeling the Want of it; at present it is certain we have very few political Wants, and those we have, may undoubtedly be answered without an Opposition, whereas by the help of one, our best Friends may be reduced to want Power to relieve us, and we be brought by
late

late Experience to know what is our greatest Want, what is indeed our only Want, and yet what is always in our Power——
UNANIMITY AMONGST OURSELVES.

F I N I S.







